(b) if so, the steps taken to provide proper protection to them?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) and (b) There have been incidents of harassment, intimidation, obtrusive surveillance and violence against the personnel of High Commission of India, Islamabad and their family members by the operatives of the Pakistan intelligence agencies.

Government have lodged strong protests and conveyed deep concern to Pakistan on all these incidents. Such actions are in violation of the basic norms of diplomatic conduct and are totally unacceptable.

Government of India have called upon the Government of Pakistan to fulfil its commitments both under the vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 as well as the Bilateral Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic Personnel of 1992. Under the international conventions and the bilateral agreement, responsibility for ensuring the safety of diplomatic missions and personnel lies with the host Government. We have urged the Government of Pakistan to take effective measures to respect their obiligations and fulfil their responsibilities in ensuring the safety & security of the personnel of our Mission in Islamabad. On our part we scrupulously follow the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and Bilateral Code of Conduct.

Chinese Nuclear Equipment Sale to Pakistan

14. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government attention has been drawn to news reports that China is selling nuclear equipments to Pakistan once again;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the steps Government have taken to counter such threats to country's security?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL):(a) Yes, Sir. Government has seen news reports on the transfer of nuclear equipment by China to Pakistan.

(b) and (c) Government are fully aware of the clandestine nature of Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme. The security situation of India is constantly under review particularly in the light of developments in the neighbourhood. Government will take all necessary measures designed to cope with any threat that may be posed to the secuirty of the nation.

Restructuring and Revival of Hindustan Shipyard, Visakhapatnam

15. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has given representation for capital restructuring and revival of Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam;

(b) the assistance sought for and proposed to be released; and

(c) the policy of direct support for survival of Indian ship building yards?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRIT.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (c) The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, while forwarding on 15.7.96 the representation of Telugunadu Trade Union Council (TNTUC) unit, Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., Visakhapatnam had requested for capital restructuring of HSL and continuing the Government assistance for shipbuilding industry.

Action has since been initiated by the Government to process the proposals relating to capital restructuring of HSL and re-introduction of subsidy scheme.

Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development Project

16. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to UN-ESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), India would benefit from the Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) Project

on the eve of the Transport and Communication Decade (1997);

(b) If so, the details thereof including estimated expenditure to be mobilised by Government and other UN agencies;

(c) Whether this would facilitate rural areas in the region through development of connections with important business and urban centres; and

(d) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (d) ALTID consists of Asian Highway Network (AH) and Trans Asian Roadways (TAR) and it is part of the Transport and Communication Decade Phase-II (1992-96) of ESCAP. India supports the expeditious completion of both the projects. The Trans-Asian Railway Project has been recommended for detailed study by the specialized agencies. The ALTID project is expected to be cost efficient and will facilitate movement of traffic across the nations and this would help rural economy as well. The need of mobilisation of funds would arise after completion of studies.

Handing over of Rural Telephone Exchanges to Private Operators in Andhra Pradesh

17. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to hand over rural telephone exchanges in Andhra Pradesh to private operators;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to improve basic phone services in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) (1) All the electromechanical exchanges which have higher fault liability are proposed to be replaced by State of Art Digital Electronic exchanges for better quality of services.

(2) All out efforts are being made to upgrade the external plant with the introduction of ducts, use of Jelly filled cables and rehabilitation of overhead lines etc.

(3) All worn out telephone instruments are planned to be replaced with good quality push button instruments.

(4) Digital Trunk Automatic Exchanges (TAXs) are Planned for to meet the growing demand for STD/ISD.

Operation of CT.B.T.

18. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, without India's concurrence, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty cannot be made operational;

(b) whether pressure has been mounted on Indian Government by a number of foreign powers to sign the agreement by invoking the so-called entry into force clause; and

(c) whether there is a proposal to approach the International Court of Justice in defence of our national interests?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Article XIV of the CTBT states that the CTBT will enter into force 180 days after the date of deposit of the instruments of ratification by all 44 countries listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty. These 44 countries include India.

(b) India has remained undeterred on its principled and consistent stand on the CTBT which enjoys national consensus. We have conveyed our opposition to article XIV on the Entry into Force, which is also country to inernational legal norms. There has been no pressure on Government to sign the CTBT by invoking the Article on the Entry into Force clause.

(c) At present, we are not considering any proposal to approach the International Court of Justice.